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ABSTRACT

This document presents one module in a set of training resources for trainers to use with parents and/or professionals serving children with disabilties; focus in on placement in the least restrictive environment. The modules stress content and activities that build skills and offer resources to promote parent-professional collaboration. Each module takes about 2 hours to deliver. The module guide has eight sections: a publicity flyer, topic narrative, overview, trainer agenda, activities, summary, bibliography, and evaluation. Introductory information explains how to use the modules including conducting a needs assessment, planning the training, selecting the training module, implementation, evaluation, and followup. Objectives of this module are: (1) become familiar with the definitions of terms related to placement recommendations, (2) identify program placement and services options, (3) examine the legal issues surrounding least restrictive environment, (4) examine barriers to placement in the least restrictive environment and possible solutions to those barriers, and (5) develop skills in contributing to the program placement recommendation process. A bibliography identifies seven books, magazines, or other resources. (DB)

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PLACEMENT in the LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

California State Department of Education
Bill Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sacramento, CA, 1988

EC220240

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California State Department of Education,
Special Education Division
Program, Curriculum and Training Unit

Presents a Module on:

Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Prepared by:

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Edited by:

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Joyce Eckrem

John Flores

1988

This module, as well as thirteen others, were produced under the direction of Karl E. Murray and Susan Westaby of the Program, Curriculum and Training Unit, Special Education Division, CA State Department of Education. The modules are being field-tested throughout 1988. During this field-test stage, they are available by sending $ 5.00 for each module (includes tax and mailing) to: Parent Training Modules, CA State Department of Education, P.O. Box 944272 - Room 621B, Sacramento, CA, 94244-2720. Make checks payable to Parent Training Modules.

INTRODUCTION

The Parent/Professional Training Modules have been developed to serve as a core set of training resources for trainers to use primarily with groups of parents. Some of the trainings were designed specifically for combined groups of parents and professionals, and all the trainings can be adapted for use with parents or professionals as separate or combined audiences. The training modules in the series focus on content and activities that build skills and offer resources to promote parent-professional collaboration to ensure quality education for all students with disabilities. There are fourteen training modules in this series:

Parent Professional Collaboration
Parental Involvement
Stress and Support in the Family
Coping with Loss and Change
Parent Support Groups
An Effective Community Advisory Committee
Community Advisory Committee Leadership Training
Communication Skills
The Individualized Education Program: Rights and Responsibilities
Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment
Training for Professionals Working with Families
Parent Professional Collaboration in Planning for Employment
Transition Planning
Interagency Collaboration: The Parents' Role

Each training module has eight sections:

Flyer
Topic Narrative
Overview
Trainer Agenda
Activities
Summary
Bibliography
Evaluation

Within each of these sections there are these materials:

Flyer - The Flyer highlights what participants can expect to learn by attending the training. It can be personalized for each training by adding date, time, and location in the appropriate spaces.

Topic Narrative -- The Topic Narrative contains content information specifically for the trainer. Trainers use the information to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of the training module.

Overview -- The Overview contains the goals and objectives for the module; and the content and presentation strategy for each activity contained within the module.

Trainer Agenda -- The Trainer Agenda contains details of trainer and participant activities, materials and media. It is a suggested agenda that trainers can personalize to fit their style and the specific needs of the participants. A few modules that deal with sensitive or difficult content have Trainer Tips included in the Agenda section.

Summary -- The Summary contains highlights of all the content information presented in activities within the training. The Summary was designed to provide information to prospective participants and to workshop planners.

Bibliography -- The Bibliography contains the names of books, magazines and other resources that were used as references in developing the training modules and may serve as a list of suggested reading materials for trainers as well as participants.

Evaluation -- The Evaluation contains questions that directly assess the objectives of the module as well as some general questions to evaluate the usefulness of materials and trainer effectiveness.

The Parent/Professional Training Modules have been designed to be a flexible and expandable resource for trainers of parents and professionals. It can be housed in binders or in file folders and rearranged as needed. Trainers are urged to add articles, resources and other materials that will make each training reflect their individual style and meet the needs of the participants.

HOW TO USE THESE TRAINING MODULES

Conduct a Needs Assessment:

Gather as much information as you can about the groups that you will be working with. The following types of questions may help:

Does the group meet regularly or is it assembled specifically for the purpose of this training?

What does the group want to accomplish? Does it have a stated goal? Are there a set of outcomes that the group wants to achieve?

Who is involved in the group (agencies and organizations)?

If the group is an ongoing group, how is the group organized? (officers, executive committee, standing committees, task groups, etc.)

What has the group already done? What training has the group already received?

What is the group working on now?

How does the group get things done?

Has the group conducted a needs assessment to determine the group's need for training and the training topics of interest?

Plan the Training

Typically, this is a dialogue between the trainer and the client. Often, the client will have a specific topic or activity in mind. Sometimes additional topics will be suggested during the needs assessment process when the trainer probes to get more information. The trainer can share a list of module topics and/or several module summaries to aid the client in selection of a topic(s) from the series.

Select the Training Module

The Parent/Professional Training Modules offer a wide selection of topics and activities. The trainer can select the module that deals with the topic chosen by the client.

Review the Training Module

The module provides the core activities and a suggested trainer agenda. The trainer can adjust both to reflect their individual style and the needs of the client.

Identify Additional Resource Materials

The trainer can add articles, resources, and other materials to the core training module. Often a trainer will introduce local resources or pertinent sample materials.

Deliver the Training

The Parent/Professional Training Modules are best delivered by a training team of a parent and a professional. Collaboration is modeled by the team as each member of the team displays unique perspectives, abilities and knowledge as they enhance each others presentation styles.

Evaluate the Training

Evaluation is an essential element of any training. Each module includes an evaluation that assesses the specific objectives of the module and the usefulness of materials. These evaluations can assist the trainer in refining the module content and modifying presentation style, if needed.

"Follow-Up" the Training

It is a good practice to follow-up any training with a personal visit, letter, or a phone call. The trainer may wish to keep a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of participants to facilitate follow-up. The follow-up usually consists of discussion about how the training may have impacted the client's personal or professional life. Clients may express the desire for further training and/or materials and resources.

Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

(For All Interested and Involved Parents)

You, as a parent, will learn about:

- the definitions of terms related to placement recommendations
- the legal issues surrounding least restrictive environment
- the program / placement and services options for students with special needs
- barriers to placement in the least restrictive environment and possible solutions
- the process of making program/placement recommendations

Day and Date:

Time:

Location:

For More Information, Call:

Please Come

Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Topic Narrative

After an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team has determined that a student is eligible for special education services and has written individual goals and objectives for that student, the next step in the IEP process is to make recommendations concerning the environment in which he or she will receive the services needed to reach these goals. State and federal statutes and regulations require that the placement recommendation be made on an individual basis at least annually and that placement be in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Determining what the term "least restrictive environment" means and how the laws related to placement are to be implemented has been at times both complex and controversial.

California Education Code mandates the provision of " a full continuum of program options to meet the educational and service needs of individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment". The California State Board of Education adopted the following policy statement in June of 1978: "least restrictive environment means: to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions, are educated with children who are not handicapped. Removal from the regular school environment shall occur only when the nature of the handicap is such that the education in a regular class, with the use of special education and related services cannot be achieved satisfactorily". California Administrative Code, Title 5, Section 3001(b) states: " 'Appropriate education,' as in 'free, appropriate, public education,' is an educational program and related service(s) as determined on an individual basis which meets the unique needs of each individual with exceptional needs. Such educational program and related service(s) shall be based on goals and objectives as specified in an individualized education program and determined through the process of assessment and IEP planning in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Such an educational program shall provide the equal opportunity for each individual with exceptional needs to achieve his or her full potential, commensurate with the opportunity provided to other pupils." The federal Assistant Secretary of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS), in "Clarifying the Standards: Placement in a Least Restrictive Environment", noted that these regulations are not always interpreted or implemented properly, and required that individual states adopt written procedures for placement decisions. In October, 1986, the California State Board of Education adopted a policy statement on LRE (See Handout 2C) which outlines how education agencies should ensure that a full continuum of program options is available and which emphasizes maximum interaction between individuals with exceptional needs and their nonhandicapped peers.

While these laws and regulations seem to be clear, LRE continues to be a major issue at the compliance level. The greatest difficulties arise when one program option is minimally appropriate and less restrictive. At the local education agency level, still other factors cloud the decision making process. The distance and/or length of time a student must travel between home and school, the cost of a particular program versus the adequacy (or inadequacy) of funding, the overcrowding of many regular education classes and entire school districts, the level of the quality of services in different settings, and the severity of the student's handicap all complicate the LRE issue.

In recent years, the concepts of partial participation and community based instruction have been offered as alternative strategies for students with severe disabilities. Local education agencies and/or individual school sites are implementing model programs which avoid pullout programs in favor of using a variety of personnel to support many learning handicapped and moderately involved students in the regular classroom successfully. Disability awareness programs and in-service trainings for teachers on alternative strategies, such as Cooperative Learning and the Strategies Intervention Model are also helping to make less restrictive placements more favorable.

Despite all of these complexities, some clarity exists. Least restrictive environment does not mean that a student must fail in the regular classroom before special services are provided. Placement recommendations cannot be determined by category of handicapping condition or by availability of space, transportation, or availability of services.

Overview

The goal of this module is to understand the concept of least restrictive environment in relation to Individualized Education Program (IEP) placement recommendations.

Objectives

1. Become familiar with the definitions of terms related to placement recommendations.
2. Identify program placement and services options.
3. Examine the legal issues surrounding least restrictive environment.
4. Examine barriers to placement in the least restrictive environment and possible solutions to those barriers.
5. Develop skills in contributing to the program placement recommendation process.

Objective Number	Suggested Minutes	Content	Presentation Strategy
	10	Introductions,Objectives and Agenda Review	
1	10	Pre/Post-Test	Individual Activity
1	20	Definitions in Laws/Regulations	Lecturette and Large Group Discussion
2	15	Placement and Services Options	Lecturette and Large Group Discussion
3	15	Legal Issues	Lecturette
4	30	Case Study - Part I	Small Group Activity and Large Group Discussion
	10	Break	
4&5	10	Case Study - Part II Barriers	Large Group Activity
5	10	Case Study - Part III Solutions	Large Group Activity
1	10	Pre/Post-Test	Individual Activity and Large Group Discussion
	10	Conclusion and Evaluation	
	150		

Trainer Tips

For the purposes of this module the "least restrictive environment" is defined as the regular classroom with modifications. Anything other than that is more restrictive. This concept is reflected in all the activities and handouts presented in the module. This intent may represent a departure from a participant's current perception of "least restrictive environment". Trainers should pay particular attention to the California State Department of Education Policy Statement on Least Restrictive Environment (Activity/Handout 2C) and An Example of Placement Options (Activity/Handout 3A).

It is suggested that this module be delivered by experienced trainers that are very familiar with the concepts and conflicts surrounding educational placement. Additionally, whenever possible, this module should be co-presented with a parent or a consumer of services familiar with the issues .

Suggested Trainer Agenda

WORKSHOP TITLE: Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

DATE: _____ PAGE: 1

CLIENT: _____

PRESENTERS: _____

GOAL: To understand the concept of least restrictive environment in relation to IEP placement recommendations.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Become familiar with the definitions of terms related to placement recommendations.
2. Identify program placement and services options.
3. Examine the legal issues surrounding least restrictive environment.
4. Examine barriers to placement in the least restrictive environment and possible solutions to those barriers.
5. Develop skills in contributing to the program placement recommendation process.

TIME	WHO	TRAINER ACTIVITIES/CONTENT	PARTICIPANT ACTIVITIES	HANDOUTS MEDIA
10 minutes		Welcome Introductions Objectives and Agenda Review Display Objectives and Agenda on Chart Paper	Listen	Chart Paper- Pens Tape Chart of Objectives and Agenda
10 minutes		Pre/Post-Test Activity/Handout 1 Individual Activity Distribute Handout 1 Explain that the purpose of the Pre/Post-Test is to allow participants to survey their own level of knowledge regarding LRE. Tell participants they will have the opportunity to review these statements and discuss their responses at the end of the workshop. Ask participants to read each statement and circle True if they agree or False if they disagree. Ask participants to place the completed test aside until later. (Answers are provided in Activity/Handout 6)	True/False Test	Handout 1

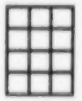
Suggested Trainer Agenda (Continued)

TIME	WHO	TRAINER ACTIVITIES/CONTENT	PARTICIPANT	HANDOUTS
20 minutes		<u>Definitions in Laws/Regulations</u> Activity/Handout 2A, 2B, 2C Lecturette and Large Group Discussion Distribute Handouts 2A, 2B, 2C Point out key features of each handout, emphasizing the definitions and Education Code quotations. Allow time to answer participant questions.	Listen Share Ask Questions	Handouts 2A, 2B, 2C
15 minutes		<u>Placement and Services Options</u> Activity/Handout 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D Lecturette and Large Group Discussion Distribute Handouts 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D Review Handout 3A. Trainer will identify possible placement options. Indicate that placement and services options need to be age appropriate. Options on Handout 3A are primarily for school age groups. Review Handout 3B. Note that Resource Specialist programs are often referred to as "pullout programs". The student is removed from the regular classroom, for part of the school day, in order to receive these services. Review Handout 3C. Note that in addition to the services listed, transportation, extended school year, and bilingual services must also be provided if appropriate. Review Handout 3D. Conclude by saying that students' programs may include a combination of these services.	Listen Share Ask Questions	Handouts 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D

Suggested Trainer Agenda (Continued)

TIME	WHO	TRAINER ACTIVITIES/CONTENT	PARTICIPANT	HANDOUTS
15 minutes		Legal Issues Activity/Handout 4 Lecturette Distribute Handout 4 Review handout, emphasizing major legal principles and issues. Stress that placement recommendations must be made on an individual basis.	Listen	Handout 4
30 minutes		Case Study - Part I Activity/Handout 5A, 5B Small Group Activity and Large Group Discussion Distribute Handouts 5A, 5B This is a three part activity Ask participants to form small groups. Small groups may choose to do either Case Study I (Handout 5A) or Case Study II (Handout 5B). Instruct participants to read case study individually and generate responses to questions as a group. Select a recorder/reporter from each group to record group responses on chart paper and report back to large group. Encourage participants to use Handouts 3A, 3B, 3C & 3D to assist them. Allow 10 minutes for this portion of the activity. Have recorder/reporter from each group share the group's responses. Ask participants which factors most strongly influenced their decisions. Remind participants that there are no right or wrong answers. Allow 20 minutes for this portion of activity.	Form small groups. Read case study and develop group responses to questions Reporters share group responses	Handouts 5A, 5B Chart Paper
10 minutes		Break		

Suggested Trainer Agenda (Continued)

TIME	WHO	TRAINER ACTIVITIES/CONTENT	PARTICIPANT	HANDOUTS
10 minutes		<u>Case Study - Part II - Barriers</u> Activity/Handout 5 A or B Large Group Activity Explain that despite the laws and regulations concerning LRE, implementation is often a challenge. Ask participants to reflect on the case study they just completed and try to identify barriers to implementation. Trainer records responses on chart paper. Possible barriers might include the following: transportation distance/time between home and school architectural barriers attitudes of staff, parents and peers financial impact/funding model availability of related services	Identify Barriers	 Chart Paper
10 minutes		<u>Case Study - Part III - Solutions</u> Activity/Handout 5 A or B Large Group Activity Ask participants to generate solutions to these identified barriers. Trainer records solutions on chart paper. Possible solutions might include the following: use of peers as students' aides ramps, accessible facilities in-service training to support staff, parents and peers adaptive devices adapting the curriculum alternative instructional strategies	Identify Solutions	Chart Paper

Suggested Trainer Agenda (Continued)

TIME	WHO	TRAINER ACTIVITIES/CONTENT	PARTICIPANT	HANDOUTS
10 minutes		Pre/Post-Test - Answers Activity/Handout 6 Individual Activity and Large Group Discussion Ask participants to refer to Pre/Post-Test (Activity/Handout 1). Allow 5 minutes for participants to review their prior answers and make any changes based on knowledge gained. Provide correct answers to participants (Handout 6). Have participants volunteer to share answers they may have changed.	Review prior responses	Handout 1, 6
10 minutes		Conclusion Restate Objectives. Thank Participants. Complete Evaluations/Handout 7.	Complete Evaluation	Handout 7

Placement in the LRE
Activity/Handout 1
Individual Activity
10 minutes

Pre/Post-Test

T F 1. PL 94-142 requires that all children, regardless of handicapping conditions will be provided a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

T F 2. Least restrictive environment is a concept meaning that all students with disabilities will be educated in the regular classroom at their neighborhood school.

T F 3. Program placement is based upon the students type (category) of disability.

T F 4. All special day class students spend the entire school day with their special education classmates only.

T F 5. The resource specialist program is for students who are mildly handicapped, while special day class placement is for students who are severely handicapped.

T F 6. Once a child is placed in a particular program setting, he/she will continue in that type of setting throughout his/her schooling.

T F 7. Students with disabilities are always placed in classrooms/programs with other students with similar disabilities.

T F 8. It is appropriate to locate classes for teen-aged special education students on elementary school sites.

T F 9. A student who is deaf will have classes/programs for the deaf as his/her only placement option.

Placement in the LRE
Activity/Handout 2A
Lecturette and
Large Group Discussion
20 minutes

Least Restrictive Environment

California's commitment to the provision of services to individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment is clearly stated in legislative intent:

> "Individuals with exceptional needs are offered special assistance programs which promote maximum interaction with the general school population... "
> (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Sect. 56001(g))

This commitment is further stressed in the mandate which requires that:

> "A pupil shall be referred for special educational instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized."
> (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 4, Art. 1, Sect. 56303)

Policies for implementing this intent statewide are based on the principle that individuals with exceptional needs should receive their education in chronologically age appropriate environments with nonhandicapped peers. This principle maintains that both nonhandicapped and handicapped children are most successfully educated in a shared environment where qualities of understanding, cooperation and mutual respect are nurtured.

Definition of Appropriate

The California Administrative Code, Title 5, Section 3001(b) states: " 'Appropriate education,' as in 'free, appropriate, public education,' is an educational program and related service(s) as determined on an individual basis which meets the unique needs of each individual with exceptional needs. Such educational program and related service(s) shall be based on goals and objectives as specified in an individualized education program and determined through the process of assessment and IEP planning in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Such an educational program shall provide the equal opportunity for each individual with exceptional needs to achieve his or her full potential, commensurate with the opportunity provided to other pupils."

Clarifying the Standards: Placement in a Least Restrictive Environment

Comments by: Madeline Will, Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)

Some people have interpreted the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to mean that all handicapped students would be placed in a regular classroom regardless of their educational needs, and that a child would have to fail in a regular classroom before special services would be provided. Such is not OSERS' intent.

OSERS' goal is to ensure that:

- Each handicapped child's education placement is determined annually.
- The placement is based on his or her individualized education program (IEP).
- A continuum of alternative placements are available to meet the needs of handicapped children for special education and related services. The continuum includes regular classes, special classes, special schools, instruction in hospitals and institutions.
- Each child is educated in the LRE appropriate to that child.

The overriding principle is that placement decisions must be made on an individual basis and that various alternative placements must be available in order to ensure that each handicapped child receives an education which is appropriate to his or her individual needs.

Findings in the past indicate that placements sometimes are not based on the unique educational needs of the individual child. Placement decisions may have been determined by the availability of space, transportation, or required related services or by the category of handicapping condition.

Therefore, we are reviewing the process by which placement decisions are being made. In order for the LRE requirements to be met, written procedures for placement decisions must be in place. The standards OSERS developed can be used as guidelines to assist states in the development of their own guidelines.

OSERS has received numerous comments and suggestions on the implementation of LRE. We are reviewing these comments carefully and intend to revise our standards to more clearly reflect the intent expressed in this statement.

California State Department of Education

Policy Statement on Least Restrictive Environment

Approved by California State Board of Education, October 10, 1986

California's commitment to the provision of services to individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment is clearly stated in legislative intent:

> "Individuals with exceptional needs are offered special assistance programs which promote maximum interaction with the general school population... "
> (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Sect. 56001(g))

This commitment is further stressed in the mandate which requires that:

> "A pupil shall be referred for special educational instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized."
> (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 4, Art. 1, Sect. 56303)

Policies for implementing this intent statewide are based on the principle that individuals with exceptional needs should receive their education in chronologically age appropriate environments with nonhandicapped peers. This principle maintains that both nonhandicapped and handicapped children are most successfully educated in a shared environment where qualities of understanding, cooperation and mutual respect are nurtured.

It is also the intent of federal and state statutes and regulations that individuals with exceptional needs attend the same public school as nonhandicapped students in their neighborhood unless it is determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to be inappropriate to their educational and social needs.

Therefore, placement in an educational environment other than a regular class should be considered only when the IEP team determines that the regular environment, services, and/or curriculum cannot be modified effectively to meet the needs of the student as specified in his/her IEP.

Both federal and state regulations mandate the provision of:

> "... a full continuum of program options to meet the educational and service needs of individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment."
> (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Art. 2, Sect. 56031)

To ensure that a full continuum of program options are available, all education agencies should review their current delivery systems to determine that:

1. Program options in regular education environments are available at local neighborhood schools.

2. Special education programs, to the maximum extent appropriate to student needs, are housed on regular school campuses and dispersed throughout the district.

3. The physical location of the program facilitates continuing social interaction with nonhandicapped students.

4. Individuals with exceptional needs have equal access to all regular education activities, programs, and facilities on the regular school site and participate in those activities as appropriate to their needs.

5. Administrative policies and procedures encourage the close cooperation of all school personnel to facilitate opportunities for social interaction between individuals with exceptional needs and nonhandicapped individuals.

6. Administrative policies and procedures allow individuals with exceptional needs maximum access to appropriate general education academic programs and school personnel are given necessary support to ensure the student's success.

7. Long-range plans and commitments for physical housing on regular school campuses are made in order to avoid frequent and disruptive program relocations.

8. Through long-range commitments for physical housing on regular school campuses, individuals with exceptional needs are afforded opportunities to develop and maintain continuing relationships with nonhandicapped peers.

Consistent with the determination of an IEP team, students may be placed in residential schools or nonpublic schools and may be provided educational services in medical facilities. Administrators of those facilities and programs are encouraged to provide opportunities for participation with nonhandicapped students in both educational and social activities.

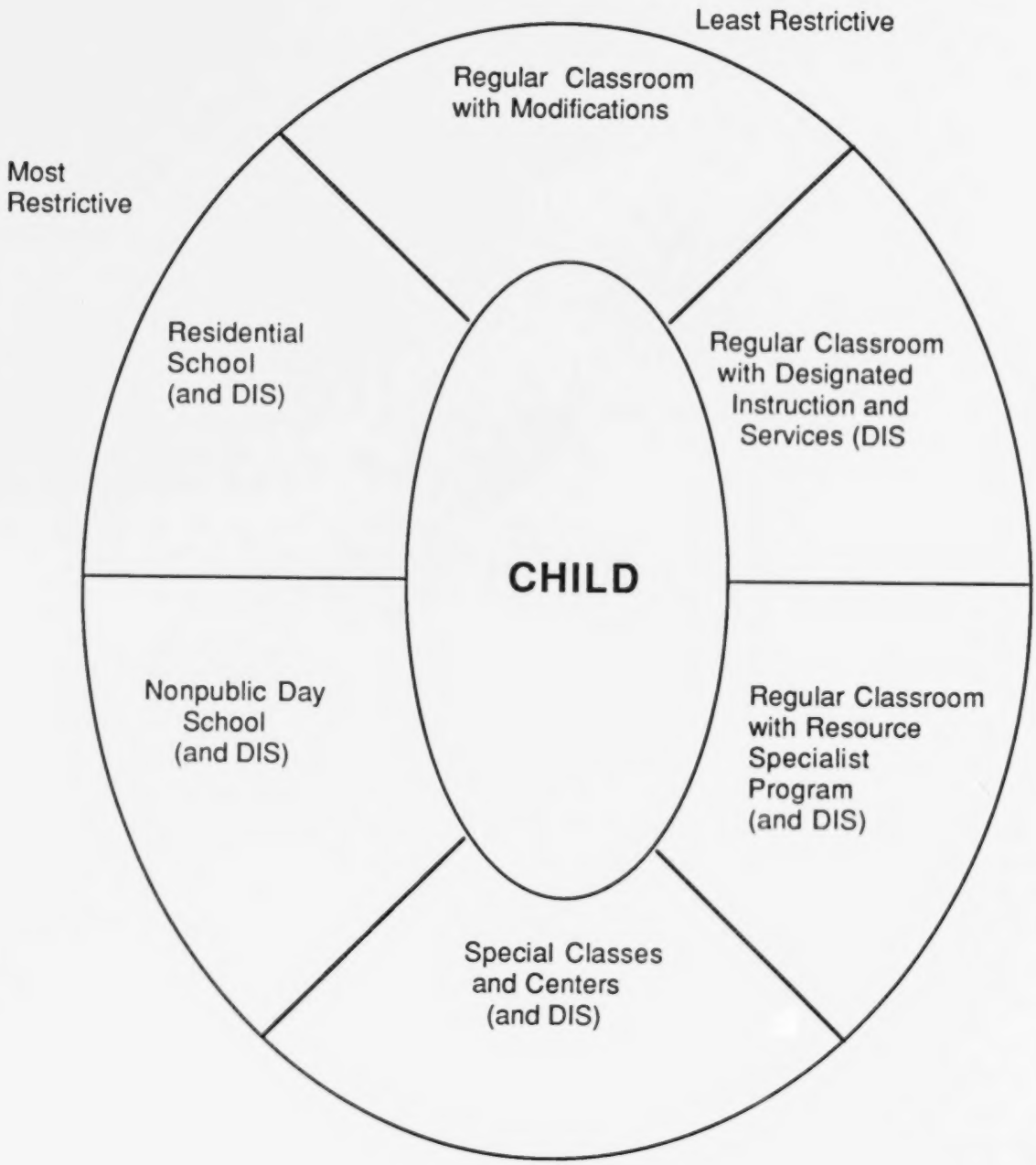
In all instances, the IEP team determines the extent to which an individual with exceptional needs participates in regular education with nonhandicapped students. The determination of appropriate program placement, related services needed, and curriculum options to be offered is made by the IEP team based upon the unique needs of the handicapped student rather than the label describing the handicapping condition or the availability of programs.

To summarize California's position on the least restrictive environment for individuals with exceptional needs receiving a public education, the State Department of Education heartily concurs with the Legislature in its' declaration that:

> "Special education is an integral part of the total public education system and should provide maximum interaction between handicapped and nonhandicapped pupils ..."
> (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Art. 1, Sect. 56031)

Placement in the LRE
Activity/Handout 3A
Lecturette and
Large Group Discussion
15 minutes

An Example of Placement Options


Least Restrictive
Regular Classroom with Modifications
Most Restrictive
Residential School (and DIS)
Regular Classroom with Designated Instruction and Services (DIS
CHILD
Nonpublic Day School (and DIS)
Regular Classroom with Resource Specialist Program (and DIS)
Special Classes and Centers (and DIS)

Resource Specialist Program

California Education Code

56362. (a) The resource specialist program shall provide, but not be limited to, all of the following:

(1) Provision for a resource specialist or specialists who shall provide instruction and services for those pupils whose needs have been identified in an individualized education program developed by the individualized education program team and who are assigned to regular classroom teachers for a majority of a school day.

(2) Provision of information and assistance to individuals with exceptional needs and their parents.

(3) Provision of consultation, resource information, and material regarding individuals with exceptional needs to their parents and to regular staff members.

(4) Coordination of special education services with the regular school programs for each individual with exceptional needs enrolled in the resource specialist program.

(5) Monitoring of pupil progress on a regular basis, participation in the review and revision of individualized education programs, as appropriate, and referral of pupils who do not demonstrate appropriate progress to the individualized education program team.

(6) Emphasis at the secondary school level on academic achievement, career and vocational development, and preparation for adult life.

Designated Instruction and Services

California Education Code

56363. (a) Designated instruction and services as specified in the individualized education program shall be available when the instruction and services are necessary for the pupil to benefit educationally from his or her instructional program. The instruction and services shall be provided by the regular class teacher, the special class teacher, or the resource specialist if teacher or specialist is competent to provide such instruction and services and if the provision of such instruction and services by the teacher or specialist is feasible. If not, the appropriate designated instruction and services specialist shall provide such instruction and services. Designated instruction and services shall meet standards adopted by the board.

(b) These services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Language and speech development and remediation.
(2) Audiological services.
(3) Orientation and mobility instruction.
(4) Instruction in the home or hospital.
(5) Adapted physical education.
(6) Physical and occupational therapy.
(7) Vision services.
(8) Specialized driver training instruction.
(9) Counseling and guidance.
(10) Psychological services other than assessment and development of the individualized education program.
(11) Parent counseling and training.
(12) Health and nursing services.
(13) Social worker services.
(14) Specially designed vocational education and career development.
(15) Recreation services.
(16) Specialized services for low-incidence disabilities, such as readers, transcribers, and vision and hearing services.

Special Classes and Centers

California Education Code:

56364. Special classes and centers which enroll pupils with similar and more intensive educational needs shall be available. The classes and centers shall enroll the pupils when the nature or severity of the disability precludes their participation in the regular school program for a majority of a schoolday. Special classes and centers and other removal of individuals with exceptional needs from the regular education environment shall occur only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

In providing or arranging for the provision of nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including meals and recess periods, each public agency shall ensure that each individual with exceptional needs participates in those services and activities with nonhandicapped pupils to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the individual with exceptional needs. Special classes and centers shall meet standards adopted by the board.

56364.1. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 56364, pupils with low incidence disabilities may receive all or a portion of their instruction in the regular classroom and may also be enrolled in special classes taught by appropriately credentialed teachers who serve these pupils at one or more school sites. The instruction shall be provided in a manner which is consistent with the guidelines adopted pursuant to Section 56136 and in accordance with the individualized education program.

Placement in the LRE
Activity/Handout 4
Lecturette
15 minutes

Legal Issues

Overview of Current Issues Related to Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment

Placement is:

the setting in which instruction is provided.

Placement is not:

curriculum.

the "program" for children in a particular disability category.

Four Basic Legal Principles:

1. Placement of a handicapped child must be made in the regular educational environment of the public school which the child would otherwise attend if not handicapped unless the nature or severity of the child's handicap is such that appropriate educational goals and objectives for that child (as contained in the child's individualized education program or IEP) cannot or could not be achieved in a regular classroom-based program even with the use of supplementary aids and services.

2. If placement is to be made outside of the regular education environment, it must be made in an alternative instructional setting or arrangement selected from a continuum of such settings/arrangements (arrayed from least restrictive to most restrictive) maintained by the school system. The selection of a particular alternative setting or arrangement is to be made by determining the least restrictive setting/arrangement in which the educational goals for the child could be achieved.

3. Regardless of the core placement alternative selected, a handicapped child must be educated with, and allowed to interact with, nonhandicapped children to the maximum extent appropriate.

4. Placement recommendations must be made at least annually by a group of persons (including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data and the placement alternatives) who consider carefully broad-based, documented information about the child.

Adapted from a presentation by: David Rosstetter at the South Atlantic Regional Resources Center Conference on Least Restrictive Environment in New Orleans, 1987.

Placement in the LRE
Activity/Handout 5A
Small Group Activity and
Large Group Discussion
50 minutes

Case Study I

Amanda is a 16 year old who has cerebral palsy. She uses an electric wheelchair and has enough use of her arms and hands to operate a VCR and her computer. Her vision and hearing are somewhat limited but have been corrected to a functional level. Her speech is also limited mostly by articulation difficulties. Language processing is average for her age. She reads at about a third grade level primarily by a sight word process. She has been unsuccessful learning phonics and is limited in strategies which would help her improve reading skills to be able to read newspapers, magazines and album covers that are all written at about a 4th grade reading level. She can add and subtract double digit numbers. She loves to be dressed in the latest style and to listen to rock music.

Placement recommendations are based on goals and objectives and special education and services needed. With this statement to serve as a guideline and the above information about Amanda answer the following questions.

What are two possible goals that might help meet Amanda's educational and/or social needs?

What related services should she receive?

In what type of program would you place Amanda?

Where should her program and services be offered?

What other information would help you make these decisions?

Placement in the LRE
Activity/Handout 5B
Small Group Activity and
Large Group Discussion
50 minutes

Case Study II

Pedro is a 9 year old with low self-esteem. He is very verbal and has trouble sitting still for more than a minute or two. He spends a good deal of time in the principal's office, and his classmates make fun of his getting into trouble. He appears to have a lot of ability but has not progressed very much academically for the last two years. He reads and spells at a first grade level. He appears to learn best with a phonetic approach to reading but has lots of gaps in skill acquisition that are not consistent. One day he knows a word or skill and the next day he doesn't. He often confuses the numbers he copies from his math book, but he can add and subtract numbers in his head quickly. Math appears to be his strong academic area. His soccer and baseball skills are excellent for his age, however, he doesn't get along with his teammates.

Placement recommendations are based on goals and objectives and special education and services needed. With this statement to serve as a guideline and the above information about Pedro answer the following questions.

What are two possible goals that might help meet Pedro's educational and/or social needs?

What related services should he receive?

In what type of program would you place Pedro?

Where should his program and services be offered?

What other information would help you make these decisions?

Placement in the LRE
Activity/Handout 6
Individual Activity and Large
Group Discussion
10 minutes

Answers Pre/Post-Test

1. F PL 94-142 insures that all handicapped children have available to them a free appropriate public education and related services to meet their unique needs. PL 94-142 mandates that states establish procedures to assure that handicapped children are educated with nonhandicapped children "to the maximum extent appropriate". It doesn't say "in the least restrictive environment".

2. F It is the intent of federal and state statutes and regulations that individuals with exceptional needs attend the same public schools as nonhandicapped students in their neighborhood unless it is determined by the IEP team to be inappropriate to their educational and social needs. The concept of LRE does not mean that all students will be educated in the regular classroom at their local school.

3. F Program placement is based on the recommendation of the IEP team to meet the educational and social needs of the student, not on the student's type of disability.

4. F Each special education student's IEP must contain a statement of the extent the student will participate in regular educational programs.

5. F The resource specialist program provides instruction and services for those pupils whose needs have been identified in an individualized education program developed by the IEP team and who are assigned to regular classroom teachers for a majority of the school day. Special classes enroll pupils when the nature or severity of the disability precludes their participation in the regular school program for the majority of the schoolday. Removal of individuals with exceptional needs from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. "Mild or severe" handicaps are not criteria for placement. Placement recommendations are based on the needs of the pupil as identified in an individualized education program developed by an IEP team.

6. F The IEP must be reviewed at least annually. If it is determined by the IEP team that the current placement is not appropriate it can be changed.

7. F Program placement is based on the recommendation of the IEP team to meet the educational and social needs of the student, not on the student's type of disability.

8. F "Individuals with exceptional needs are offered special assistance programs which promote maximum interaction with the general school population..."(E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Sect. 56001(g)) Policies for implementing this intent statewide are based on the principle that individuals with exceptional needs should receive their education in chronologically age appropriate environments with nonhandicapped peers.

9. F Program placement is based on the recommendation of the IEP team to meet the educational and social needs of the student, not on the student's type of disability.

Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Summary

After the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team has determined eligibility and has written goals and objectives for a student with special needs, the next step is to recommend placement. State and federal laws and regulations mandate that placement be in the least restrictive environment appropriate for each student.

California's commitment to the provision of services to individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment is clearly stated in legislative intent:

> "Individuals with exceptional needs are offered special assistance programs which promote maximum interaction with the general school population... "
> (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 1, Sect. 56001(g))

This commitment is further stressed in the mandate which requires that:

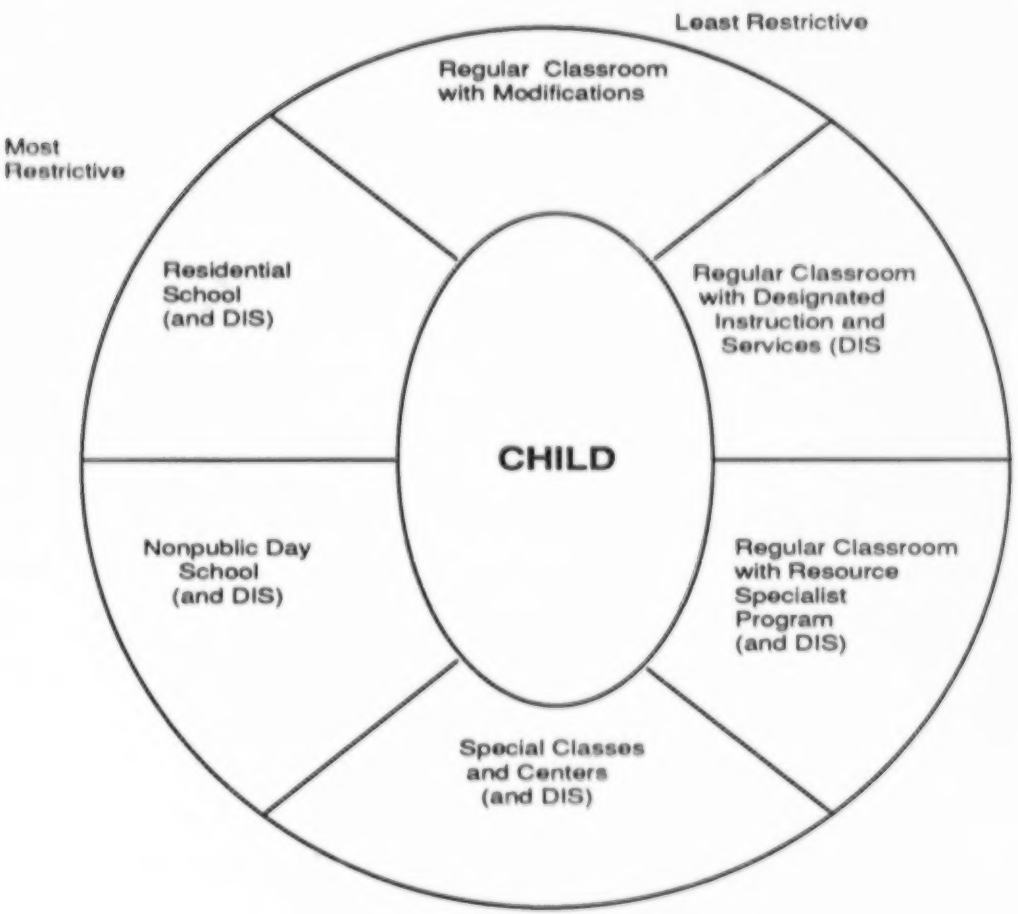
> "A pupil shall be referred for special educational instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized."
> (E.C. Part 30, Chap. 4, Art. 1, Sect. 56303)

Policies for implementing this intent statewide are based on the principle that individuals with exceptional needs should receive their education in chronologically age appropriate environments with nonhandicapped peers. This principle maintains that both nonhandicapped and handicapped children are most successfully educated in a shared environment where qualities of understanding, cooperation and mutual respect are nurtured.

California Administrative Code, Title 5, Section 3001(b) states: " 'Appropriate education,' as in 'free, appropriate, public education,' is an educational program and related service(s) as determined on an individual basis which meets the unique needs of each individual with exceptional needs. Such educational program and related service(s) shall be based on goals and objectives as specified in an individualized education program and determined through the process of assessment and IEP planning in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Such an educational program shall provide the equal opportunity for each individual with exceptional needs to achieve his or her full potential, commensurate with the opportunity provided to other pupils."

School districts must offer a full continuum of placement options for all students with special needs. In addition to the required designated instruction and services listed below, schools also must offer free transportation and extended school year to students whose IEP indicates that these services are needed.

An Example of Placement Options


Least Restrictive
Regular Classroom with Modifications
Most Restrictive
Residential School (and DIS)
Regular Classroom with Designated Instruction and Services (DIS
CHILD
Nonpublic Day School (and DIS)
Regular Classroom with Resource Specialist Program (and DIS)
Special Classes and Centers (and DIS)

Designated Instruction and Service

The services may include, but are not limited to:

language and speech development and remediation,
audiological services,
orientation and mobility instruction,
instruction in the home and hospital,
adapted physical education,
physical and occupational therapy,
vision services,
specialized driver training instruction,
counseling and guidance,
psychological services other than assessment and development of the IEP,
parent counseling and training,
health and nursing services,
social worker services,
specially designed vocational education and career development,
recreation services,
specialized services for low-incidence disabilities, such as readers, transcribers, and vision and hearing services.

There are four legal principles governing placement recommendations.

1. A full continuum of placement options must be available.
2. The educational program must be appropriate for that individual.
3. The placement recommendation must be made on an individual basis.
4. The placement recommendation must be reviewed at least annually.

Despite the seeming clarity of the law, there are many factors which complicate placement recommendations, including such issues as program cost versus funding, transportation time between home and school, the student's self-esteem, the quality of services available in various environments, and the student's medical fragility.

Additional barriers to full implementation of LRE include the attitudes of staff, parents and peers; lack of support and training for staff; architectural inaccessibility; and overcrowding of regular classrooms.

Possible strategies for overcoming these challenges include disability awareness and in-service training for staff, parents and peers; the use of model programs and/or alternative instructional methods; the use of peer support; and the inclusion of concepts like community-based instruction and partial participation for students with severe handicaps.

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Evaluation

Your responses to the questions/statements below will assist us in improving this module. Please respond to all items. Your participation in this evaluation is completely anonymous. DO NOT place your name anywhere on the evaluation.

Based on a scale of 1 through 10, how much of the information presented was new to you?

_____ 1 is not much new; 10 all new

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. After this session, I am familiar with the terms related to least restrictive environment.	1	2	3	4	5
2. As a result of this session, I can identify placement and service options.	1	2	3	4	5
3. This session made me aware of the legal issues surrounding least restrictive environment.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Because of this session, I can identify barriers to placement in the least restrictive environment.	1	2	3	4	5
5. This session helped me develop skills in the placement recommendation process.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The material presented was sensitive to all cultural groups.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The material covered information which was appropriate to all handicapping conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The material presented matched my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I will use some of the information/ resources that were introduced.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The instructors did a good job.	1	2	3	4	5

11. Specific suggestions to improve this module: _____

_____

_____